

NYTD 101

About the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD)

Background

Public Law 106-169 established the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) at section 477 of the Social Security Act, providing States with flexible funding to carry out programs that assist youth in making the transition from foster care to self-sufficiency. The law requires the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to develop a data collection system to track the independent living services States provide to youth and develop outcome measures that may be used to assess States' performance in operating their independent living programs. The law requires ACF to impose a penalty of between one and five percent of the State's annual allotment on any State that fails to comply with the reporting requirements.

Overview

To meet the law's mandate, ACF published a proposed rule in the Federal Register on July 14, 2006 and a final rule on February 26, 2008. The rule establishes the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) and requires that States engage in two data collection activities. First, the State is to collect information on each youth who receives independent living services paid for or provided by the State and transmit this information to ACF biannually. Second, the State is to collect demographic and outcome information on certain youth in foster care whom the State will follow over time to collect additional outcome information. This information will allow ACF to track which independent living services States provide and assess the collective outcomes of youth.

States will have until October 1, 2010 to implement the rule at which time they must begin to collect data. The first submission of data to ACF will be due no later than May 15, 2011.

Information on NYTD Services

The final rule requires that States report to ACF the independent living services and supports they provide to all youth in eleven broad categories: independent living needs assessment; academic support; post-secondary educational support; career preparation; employment programs or vocational training; budget and financial management; housing education and home management training; health education and risk prevention; family

support and healthy marriage education; mentoring; and supervised independent living. States will also report financial assistance they provide, including assistance for education, room and board and other aid.

Information on NYTD Outcomes

States will survey youth regarding six outcomes: financial self-sufficiency, experience with homelessness, educational attainment, positive connections with adults, high-risk behavior, and access to health insurance.

States are to collect the outcomes information by conducting a survey of youth in foster care on or around their 17th birthday, also referred to as the baseline population. States will track these youth as they age and conduct a new outcome survey on or around the youth's 19th birthday; and again on or around the youth's 21st birthday, also referred to as the follow-up population. States will collect outcomes information on these older youth after they leave the State's foster care system, regardless of whether they are still receiving independent living services from the State when they are 19 or 21 years old. Depending on the size of the State's foster care youth population, some States may conduct a random sample of the baseline population of the 17-year-olds to participate in the outcomes survey so that they can follow a smaller group of youth as they age. All States will collect and report outcome information on a new cohort of youth every three years.